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ADDRESS DELIVERED AT DEDICATION OF GRAND RONDE MILITARY BLOCK HOUSE AT DAYTON CITY PARK, OREGON, AUG. 23, 1912

By M. C. GEORGE

Grand Army Veterans and Pioneers and Fellow Citizens:

This is an age of railroads, telegraphs, telephones, wireless messages, sky scrapers and airships, in short, progress and advancement o'er land and sea and under and over it all. Yet, within our recollection, this was an uncivilized Indian country, and exposed pioneers were working day and night to insure and upbuild American civilization. In the winter of '55 and '56 the settlers of this valley, apprehensive of the spread of the Yakima outbreak among the Indians that were gathered at the Grand Ronde Reserve, assisted probably by Lieut. Hazen's soldiers, began the building on the hill on the rim of that Reserve this old Block House as a Fort, and surrounded it with a stout stockade for refuge and defense. Afterwards it was moved to the Agency about three miles distant on the Reserve, and used as a jail for unruly Indians. Today, on its removal to this beautiful park, through the efforts of your public-spirited citizens, and the consent of our Government, with the aid of our Representatives, you have assembled to dedicate it as a momument in the memory of Gen. Joel Palmer, the founder of Dayton, and the donor of this ground, and as a museum of Indian and Pioneer relics.

Gen. Palmer was our first Supt. of Indian affairs, and he it was that assembled the various tribes of Indians on the Reserve, and largely through his influence this old Block House was erected, afterwards known as Fort Yamhill. Gen. Palmer, fearing trouble, deemed it necessary for a force of U. S. troops to be there stationed to maintain order and insure safety. Gen. Phil. Sheridan in his Memoirs says that Gen. Wool assigned him from Fort Vancouver to the Grand Ronde early in '56 and that sometime prior to his arrival at Grand Ronde the

government had sent the first troops to this station under command of Lieut. Wm. B. Hazen, afterwards Gen. Hazen of the Signal Corps. Sheridan says that he, along with a detachment of Dragoons, came to relieve Lieut. Hazen. Sheridan came to Oregon in October, 1855, and had actively participated in the Yakima War of '55 and '56. With a detachment of troops from Fort Vancouver in March, 1856, he aided in the rescue of 47 men, women and children beseiged in the Middle Block House at the Cascades, and in the repulse there of the Yakimas and Klickitats, and also in the final capture of old Chief Chenoweth and others who afterwards were tried by a military commission and hanged for the massacre of whites at The Cascades Portage. Sheridan arrived at Hazen's camp April 25, '56. It appears that Hazen and Sheridan each aided in the completion of this Block House on the hills beyond the present townsite of Sheridan. Gen. Sheridan says that Hazen had begun the erection of post buildings and that he continued the work.

It may be of interest to you Dayton citizens to note that Phil. Sheridan in his Memoirs says that the Reserve is about 25 miles south west of Dayton, Oregon. He evidently regarded Dayton as the center of the Universe, and measured things from it. He probably had noted, as doubtless have each of you, that the Heavens appear to come down in even distances all around Dayton as a center. In July, 1856, Lieut. Sheridan was superseded by Capt. David A. Russell and soon after was transferred from Grand Ronde over to the Siletz, where he aided in building Fort Hoskins and also in starting a Block House on the Yaquina. Wm. M. Hilleary, who served in Capt. A. W. Waters' Co. F, 1st Oregon Inft. Vol. informs me that old Fort Hoskins, where Hilleary was stationed about '61 or '62, was located on the Little Luckiamute at the head of King's Valley in Benton County. He visited the site several years ago and says no vestige remains of the old fort except the eternal hills on which it stood.

Gen. Sheridan writes that he spent many happy days at Fort Hoskins. After remaining there nearly a year he was again

transferred to this old Fort Yamhill in May, '57, and here was stationed with Capt. Russell still in command, until after the firing on Sumpter. In 1861 they each were ordered from Grand Ronde to the East for service in the great Civil War—Sheridan, however, remaining in charge until September, 1861, when he was relieved by Capt. Owen and then went East as Capt. Phil Sheridan. The subsequent record of Sheridan and Russell is a part of the history of our nation. Gen. Russell was killed at the Battle of Winchester. Major Jno. F. Reynolds, afterwards Gen. Reynolds, who was killed at Gettysburg, and Gen. Ord, who took part in the capture of Vicksburg, Gen. Augur and Gen. Rufus Ingalls and Capt. Dent, brother-in-law of Gen. Grant, and some claim Grant himself, each visited this fort and here spent some time in special duties for the government. However, as Capt. U. S. Grant came to Oregon in 1852 and left in September, '53, while this Reserve was not created until '55, there seems to be a question as to personal visitation by Grant. Thus, as has been said by Mr. J. G. Lewis, to whom great credit is due for this auspicious occasion and gathering, "Around the walls of this old wooden Block House have gathered brave soldiers and noted army officers whose names are written on pinnacles of fame and glory; and the written pages of the history the modern world have immortalized them whose valiant deeds shall echo down the ages yet to come."

Incident after incident marks the record of this old Block House on the tablets of National as well as State history, all rich in historic material. It has been published that in September, 1856, Capt. A. J. Smith was placed in command having under him Lieut. Jos. Wheeler, later known as Gen. Joseph Wheeler, the famous Confederate Cavalry officer, who was wounded three times, and had sixteen horses shot from under him, and afterwards one of our Generals at the battle of Santiago in the late war with Spain. There is some error in this. Gen. Wheeler did not graduate from West Point until '59, where he previously must have been four years, while his own biography as a member of Congress says he later served as

a Lieut. in Kansas and New Mexico before he joined the Confederacy in '61. I knew him and served with him in Congress, but never heard him say anything about service in Oregon. Neither does Gen. Sheridan mention any Grand Ronde service by Wheeler in his Memoirs. If such a well known man served at Grand Ronde during Sheridan's time it would seem that Sheridan who knew him well and fought and fought hard with Wheeler's Cavalry at Missionary Ridge, would in all probability have mentioned it in his Memoirs.

Associated with Grand Ronde is also a long line of prominent civilians and Oregonians, among whom I readily recall your honored Joel Palmer, Hon. R. P. Earhart, Col. Christopher Taylor, Dr. E. R. Geary—a strong pulpit orator, Capt. Chas. Lafollett, who taught me my beautiful penmanship, Ex-Sen. Nesmith, Gen. Ben Simpson, Berryman Jennings, Jno. F. Miller, A. B. Meacham, D. P. Thompson, Father Waller, Rev. J. L. Parrish, and many others. I deem myself especially fortunate in personal acquaintance with all I have mentioned, also with Gen. Hazen, U. S. Chief Signal Officer, Gen. Ingalls, Gen. Sheridan, Gen. Wheeler and Gen. U. S. Grant. When I was in Washington City Sheridan had become the Lieut. General at the head of the Army, but his memory was still alert to the scenes of his Oregon experiences. He was especially fond of burnishing up his old Chinook, and took delight in carrying on our frequent conversations in the old Indian dialect. When he saw me passing in the corridor before his open office door he would hail me something like this: "Klahowya tilakum, mika hyak chaho copa nika house. Spose nesika skookum klosh wa-wa. Nika hyiu cumtux, ancutty mika Grand Ronde illihee." Around us might have been sitting senators or judges or generals, but no matter. Sheridan would talk in classic Chinook, and I in rusty jargon—all to the consternation of those assembled, who cudgeled their brains over the strange language to which they were forced but interested listeners, wondering whether it was learned Greek or possibly ancient Sanskrit.

Speaking of Chinook, I believe it was Gov. Salomon who, on visiting from the East an Indian Reserve on the Sound, had all the Indian bucks gathered in a park for a speech. The Governor unfortunately never got further than his opening address. In his rich round tones he eloquently saluted them "Children of the Forest." This was poetical and apparently appropriate, but trouble ensued when the interpreter undertook to translate the beautiful thought into Siwash Chinook. "Tenas man kopa stick," was the way the interpreter expounded the Governor's flowery opening. Literally, "Little boys in the brush." This was too much for the assembled braves, for with grunts of disgust they arose, and drawing their blankets about them, stoically marched off, and efforts to appease their offended dignity were temporarily abandoned.

About thirty years ago when Agent P. B. Sinnott was in charge and when Father Croquet and Father Conrada, since in control of the Hawaiian Leper Colony, and now in charge of the Leper Colony at Canton, China, were the spiritual advisers of the Indians, it was my privilege, as a Washington Tyee, to pow wow the gathered Santiams, Umpquas, Calapooyas, and Rogue River Indians at this Agency; and mindful of the Governor's fate, I did my talking direct in Chinook, with frequent reference to them as "skookum tillicums," and vehement assurances of my "klosh-tum-tum" and a good deal of gesturing and a little soft-soap and some "te-he", I managed to pull through safely, with grunts of satisfaction from the braves present.

You doubtless recall Sen. Nesmith's experience during the war. Some officer in the Army of the Potomac sent up a telegram in jargon to the Senator, which, however, fell into Sec. Stanton's hands as a suspicious document. Stanton readjusted his spectacles and took a good look at it, and then called in several advisers; but no one could figure it out. It appeared to be a diabolical plot and probably treasonable. Things looked serious until by chance it was handed to Gen. Rufus Ingalls, who readily saw that it was a mere invitation in Chinook to come down to the seat of war and bring a bottle of the best brand of whisky—presumably for medical purposes.

The old Indian jargon is disappearing. Gen. Sheridan, who spoke it fluently, calls it "the Court language of the Coast tribes." It would be of historical importance to preserve in this Museum record translations of this old common tongue of Hudson's Bay Indian times. Though mainly a trader's language it was made up of many words in common use by the Indians. Through it the Indian by well known accents and gestures could express, often even eloquently, their heart emotions; and all along the coast they took to it quite naturally. A. B. Meacham, in his "Wigwam and Warpath," gives a number of occasions when the rude, untutored eloquence of Indian character found vent in the Chinook language. One of the most striking instances of Indian heart-felt jargon was given me by Mr. Van Trump, who, with Gen. Hazard Stevens, made the first ascent of Old Mt. Rainier (then called by certain tribes Takoma,) who were guided to the snow-line by old Sluikin, who there in pathetic Chinook speech fervently implored his friends not to climb the snow and ice to the summit, because up there on the snowy heights was the throne of the Great Spirit himself,—the Saghale Tyhe, who was sure to punish—possibly through storm and avalanche, such sacrilege,

Block Houses are symbols of the Pioneer past. They were scattered far and near in Oregon and Washington. They were the outposts of civilization. How thought prolific is inspired as we look on these time scarred walls brought down from the past. When a babe in my mother's arms in 1851 I was carried from an old French bateaux on the portage landing—the site of the old Block House at the upper Cascades destroyed by the elements and the flood of '76. It stood for years where now is the iron track of the Great North Bank Railroad, built at a cost of forty-eight million dollars along the Columbia River—along where rolled "the Oregon and heard no sound save its own dashing." Note the epochs. Bryant and Thanatopsis; Lieut. Phil Sheridan and the Block House. Gen. Sheridan and the famous ride to Winchester. A Union saved under a Sheridan and a Grant and a Lincoln. One Flag and one Country, and Oregon the western gem of the Nation. Indian

barbarity and danger extinct. Civilization triumphant and progressing. A great people, all inspired by the thought of Webster that when our eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, that we may ever behold the gorgeous ensign of the Republic spread all over in characters of living light; Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable.

I congratulate you, my fellow citizens of Dayton, on this day. I congratulate our State that the old wooden military Block House—Old Fort Yamhill, finds its final foundation resting place in this beautiful park, beside the placid waters of the old River of Yamhill. Here the old soldiers of our country, and here the Indians of Grand Ronde—now citizens of our common land, may come and dream of the days of long ago, when the war clouds hung low, and here Pioneers may recall the times of their early hardships and their struggles to build themselves a home on the soil of Oregon.

May the old historic Fort here stand till the worms of time crumble it into the dust from whence it came, and may the Old Flag ever float above it.